

AMENDMENT

CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A crate for holding a beverage container having an outer surface with a lower portion and a central label area, the crate comprising:
 - a unitary bottom panel having an upper surface;
 - a first pair of opposed side walls and a second pair of opposed side walls attached to the periphery of the bottom panel to form a unitary construction therewith and defining a compartment area therein; and
 - a divider assembly having a plurality of divider members attached to the upper surface of the bottom panel and extending longitudinally and transversely in the compartment area to define at least one container receiving area for receiving the beverage container therein, the divider assembly including a plurality of low profile standoff portions having a container contact surface spaced from corresponding divider members and generally transverse to the upper surface of the bottom panel, wherein the container contact surface of each standoff portion is concave, the standoff portions extending inwardly into the at least one container receiving area for engaging the lower portion of the container to provide stability thereto and for maintaining the corresponding beverage container in a spaced relationship from the divider members, wherein the standoff portions are shorter than the divider members and wherein the bottom panel, first and second pairs of opposed side walls and divider assembly are all integrally molded as one piece.
2. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 1, wherein the standoff portions have a height corresponding to the height of the container lower portion.
3. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 1, wherein the standoff portions have a relatively low profile such that a bottle is contacted below the central label area.

4. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 1, further comprising a lid member pivotably attached to at least one of the first and second pair of opposed side walls, the lid member having a lid inner surface with a lid capture area formed therein corresponding to the at least one container receiving area, the lid capture area sized to receive an upper portion of a respective container for providing alignment to the container.
5. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 1, wherein the bottom panel has a bottom surface with a plurality of projection receiving areas formed therein.
6. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 5, further comprising at least one lid member pivotably attached to at least one of the first and second pair of opposed side walls, the at least one lid member orientable between a closed position and an open position, the lid member having an outer surface with a plurality of projections extending therefrom, wherein when the lid of the crate is in the closed position and a second crate is stacked thereupon, the projections of the lid member are received within a corresponding projection receiving areas of the second crate for providing a more stable stacking configuration.
7. (Cancelled)
8. (Cancelled)
9. (Currently Amended) The crate of ~~claim 1~~claim 7, wherein the standoff portions have a height significantly shorter than the corresponding divider members.
10. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 1, wherein the at least one container receiving area has four standoff portions extending therein for engaging the container.

11. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 1, wherein the standoff portions engage the bottom panel.

12.-19. (Cancelled).

20. (Previously Presented) A crate for retaining containers having an outer surface with an upper container portion and a lower container portion, the crate comprising:

- a unitary floor having a periphery and an upper surface with a plurality of container support areas;

- a first and second pair of opposed sidewalls extending upwardly from the floor periphery forming a unitary construction therewith and defining a compartment area;

- a lid member having a first hinge portion pivotably attached to a second hinge portion of at least one of the first and second pair of opposed side walls and movable between an open and closed position, the lid member having a lid inner surface having a lid capture area formed therein corresponding to a respective one of the container support areas, the lid capture area sized to receive therein the upper container portion of a respective one of the containers for providing alignment to the container;

- a plurality of divider members extending within the compartment and projecting upwardly from the floor to define container receiving areas, wherein the floor, first and second pairs of opposed side walls and divider members are all integrally molded as one piece; and a plurality of low profile spacer members disposed proximate the floor and spaced inwardly from the divider members into corresponding container receiving areas such that the container support areas and spacer members define pockets for receiving the lower container portion, the spacer members contacting the containers and spacing the containers from the divider members and the sidewalls.

21. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 20, wherein at least one of the sidewalls has a lock receiver formed therein, and the lid member has at least one locking member attached thereto, such that when the lid member is in the closed position, the locking member is received within the lock receiver for securing the lid member thereto.

22. (Cancelled).

23. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 20, wherein the floor has a bottom surface with a plurality of receiving areas formed therein.

24. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 20, wherein the lid member has an outer surface with a projection member extending therefrom corresponding to each lid capture area, wherein when the lid member is in the closed position and a second crate is stacked thereupon, at least some of the projections on the outer surface of the lid member is received within a corresponding projection receiving area of the second crate for providing a more stable stacking configuration.

25.-28. (Cancelled).

29. The crate of claim 1 wherein the divider members are generally planar and wherein intersections of the divider members form corners in the container receiving areas, the plurality of standoff portions each extending from a longitudinally-extending one of the divider members to a transversely-extending one of the divider members in the corners.

30.-31. (Cancelled).

32. The crate of claim 29 wherein the plurality of standoff portions protrude upwardly from the upper surface of the bottom panel and protrude inwardly toward the container from the divider members.

33.-36. (Cancelled).

37. (Currently Amended) ~~The crate of claim 34~~ A crate for holding a beverage container having a lower portion and a central label area, the crate comprising:
a bottom panel having an upper surface;
a first pair of opposed side walls and a second pair of opposed side walls attached to the periphery of the bottom panel to form a unitary construction therewith and defining a compartment area therein; and
a divider assembly having a plurality of divider members attached to the upper surface of the bottom panel and extending longitudinally and transversely in the compartment area to define at least one container receiving area for receiving the beverage container therein, the divider assembly including a plurality of standoff portions shorter than the divider members, wherein the standoff portions protrude upwardly from the upper surface of the bottom panel, each standoff portion having a container contact surface spaced from corresponding divider members and generally transverse to the upper surface of the bottom panel, the standoff portions protruding inwardly toward the container from the divider members for engaging the lower portion of the container without contacting the central label area to provide stability to the container and for maintaining the corresponding beverage container in a spaced relationship from the divider members.

38. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 1 wherein the standoff portions are substantially shorter than the divider members.

39. (Currently Amended) ~~The crate of claim 1~~A crate holding a beverage container, the crate comprising:

a unitary bottom panel having an upper surface;

a first pair of opposed side walls and a second pair of opposed side walls attached to a periphery of the bottom panel to form a unitary construction therewith and defining a compartment area therein;

a divider assembly having a plurality of divider members attached to the upper surface of the bottom panel and extending longitudinally and transversely in the compartment area to define at least one container receiving area for receiving the beverage container therein, further including the beverage container having a lower portion and a central label area, the beverage container in the at least one container receiving area, the divider assembly including a plurality of low profile standoff portions having a container contact surface spaced from corresponding divider members and generally transverse to the upper surface of the bottom panel, the standoff portions extending inwardly into the at least one container receiving area for engaging the lower portion of the beverage container to provide stability thereto and for maintaining the corresponding beverage container in a spaced relationship from the divider members, wherein the standoff portions are shorter than the divider members and wherein the bottom panel, first and second pairs of opposed side walls and divider assembly are all integrally molded as one piece and wherein the standoff portions each have a height less than a height of the lower portion of the beverage container below the central label area such that the standoff portions contact the lower portion of the beverage container without contacting the central label area.

40. (Cancelled).

41. (Currently Amended) The crate of claim 40] wherein the container contact surface of each standoff portion is concave when not in contact with the beverage container.

42.-46. (Cancelled).

47. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 41 wherein the standoff portions each have a height less than $1 \frac{1}{8}$ inches.

48. (Previously Presented) The crate of claim 47 wherein the standoff portions each have a height less than $\frac{7}{8}$ inch.